

REMARKS

This amendment responds to the office action mailed November 18, 2004. In the office action the Examiner:

- objected to claims 1 and 39 for containing informalities;
- rejected claims 26-46 as being indefinite under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph; and
- rejected claims 1-5, 18 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by Uehara et al (US 5,491,440, hereinafter Uehara).

The Examiner also noted that claims 6-17, 20-25 and 27-28 would be allowable is rewritten in independent form and to overcome any rejections of parent claims directed to matters of form.

It is further noted that, the Examiner did not reject any of claims 26-38 and 39-46 on the basis of prior art.

After entry of this amendment, the pending claims are: claims 1-46.

Claim Objections

Applicants have appended a semicolon “;” to the end of line 3 of claim 1 and replaced the indefinite article “a” on line 5 of claim 39 with the definite article “the”. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the claim objections.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. 112

Claims 26-38

Claim 26 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite because the Examiner believed it was unclear whether the limitations “signals of a specific signaling type” and “a plurality of signaling types” are the same or different signals.

In response, Applicants have amended claim 26 by reciting that “the specific signaling type is one of the plurality of signaling types”. Applicants believe that, after this amendment, claim 26 and its dependent claims 27-38 should satisfy the definiteness requirement under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. Therefore, the indefiniteness-based rejections against claims 26-38 should be withdrawn.

Claim 26 was also rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being incomplete for omitting essential elements, such omission amounting to a gap between the elements. The Examiner contends that the common mode detector 304, the comparator 306

and the feedback line of the output signal through the aforementioned elements are essential to the completeness of claim 26. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Paragraph 0035 of the present application (on pages 9 and 10) expressly discloses an embodiment in which the values in the registers are generated without the use of a common mode detector and comparator. In particular, paragraph 0035 states that the output driver 300 may include external inputs 336 that allow a user to “manually” enter a value or values to configure the output driver. The last sentence of the same paragraph 0035 further discloses that, in some embodiments, the user can use the external inputs 336 to directly overwrite the values stored in the DCA registers 312, rendering the common mode detector 304 and the comparator 306 non-essential to the completeness of claim 26. Therefore, the incompleteness-based rejections against claims 26 and 29-38 should also be withdrawn.

Claims 39-46

The Examiner argues that the term “substantially equal” in claim 39 is a relative term rendering the claim indefinite under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

In response, Applicants have revised claim 39 to say that “the pre-driver generat[es] an output signal with a duty cycle corresponding to the value stored in the selected register”. Applicants believe that claim 39 as amended has satisfied the definiteness requirement under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, and rejections against claims 39-46 therefore should be withdrawn.

In addition, claims 39-46 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being incomplete for omitting essential elements, such omission amounting to a gap between the elements. The Examiner here essentially relies upon the same set of arguments against claims 26 and 29-38. As mentioned above, the specification (see, e.g., paragraph 0035) describes an embodiment in which the values stored in the DCA registers can be “manually” provided by a user through the external inputs 336. Therefore, rejections against claims 39-46 should be withdrawn for at least the same reasons applicable to claims 26 and 29-38.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. 102(b)

The Examiner rejected claims 1-5, 18 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Uehara. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

Claims 1 and 18 have been revised to include an element for combining the value in the register with a second value to produce an adjusted value, which is then used to by a pre-driver to decrease in the difference between the common mode voltage of the output signal and the reference voltage.

Claims dependent on claims 1 and 18 have been revised to make them consistent with the changes in claims 1 and 18.

Claims 1-5 and 18-19, as revised, are patentable over the prior art of record.

In light of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider this application with a view towards allowance. The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney (650) 843-7501 if a telephone call could help resolve any remaining items.

Respectfully submitted,

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